BETWEEN EUROPE & ASIA

The Origins, Theories, and Legacies of Russian Eurasianism

Edited by

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WHAT WAS EURASIANISM AND WHO MADE IT?

Mark Bassin, Sergey Glebov, & Marlene Laruelle

HISTORIANS have long noted the tortured path of Russia's self-identification vis-à-vis Europe, the West, or modernity on the one hand, and the organization of the domestic political community on the other. At times, the Russian Empire appeared as a European imperium with a civilizing mission in Asia and elsewhere, and at other times it was imagined as an anti-Western force, a bulwark of Romantic visions of spirituality opposed to Western individualism and mechanistic relations.[1] This multifaceted set of oppositions in Russian history—empire versus nation, Europe versus Asia, and modernity versus antimodern utopias—has often intermingled in curious, sometimes fascinating ways, complicating the notion of Russian history in the comparative framework of European modernity. Perhaps nowhere were these complications as visible as in the doctrine and movement of Eurasianism. The focus of this volume is to study Eurasianism from different disciplinary and thematic perspectives.

Scholars have treated Eurasianism as a geographical ideology, a conservative movement akin to German antimodernists in the Weimar period and beyond, as a form of Russian nationalism and as a modernist response to Russia's imperial entanglements. It has also been approached as a scholarly ideology, based on Russian importation and reworking of various European

products, from the German idea of the *Landschaftseinheit* or territorial complex to Saussurian linguistics.[2] Individual participants in the Eurasianist movement have received scholarly attention for their contributions to linguistics, history, economics, geography, philosophy, and religious studies. Yet the complexity of the movement and its ideas—elaborated from a variety of vantage points and informed by a range of intellectual lineages and individual circumstances—requires the collective effort of many scholars. This volume seeks to fill the void and elucidate current research on Eurasianism in Russia, Europe, the United States, and Japan from a truly interdisciplinary perspective.

Through this perspective we hope to approach the many connections and entanglements of Eurasianism as a movement and a set of ideas. The main goal of our volume is to go beyond the narratives produced by the Eurasianists themselves and to reconstruct multiple contexts within which the movement and the ideas functioned, to which they responded, and which they generated. In doing so, we also extend our inquiry beyond the history of the movement proper: we hope to trace the origins of Eurasianism in the intellectual and cultural dislocations of imperial Russia, look at the émigré and exile contexts of the production of Eurasianist ideas, and follow Eurasianist influences in time and space, from Japan to the late USSR. In offering this exploration of Eurasianism's externalities, we aspire to contribute to a range of debates on historical issues in Russia and beyond, from diaspora nationalism to the interwar history of global cultural entanglements, and from Russian responses to war and revolution to late Soviet developments.

Eurasianism: People

The Eurasianist doctrine was elaborated by Russian émigrés, refugees from the revolutionary turmoil of 1917 and the following Civil War, when the founders of the movement coalesced in the Bulgarian capital in the summer and fall of 1920.[3] These founders were Prince Nikolai Sergeevich Trubetskoi, a scion of one of Russia's most aristocratic families and later a renowned linguist; Petr Petrovich Suvchinskii, a cultural entrepreneur, connoisseur of music, and publisher; Petr Nikolaevich Savitskii, a young and energetic student of Russia's leading liberal politician and scholar Petr Struve; Georgii Vasil'evich Florovskii, a Church historian and theologian; and Prince Andrei Aleksandrovich Lieven, a poet and eventually an Orthodox priest who descended from the Moscow-based Orthodox branch of the renowned Baltic German noble family. Fresh with experiences of the catastrophic collapse of the imperial state and society, this group engaged in intense discussions of the causes and outcomes of the Russian Civil War and pondered the problem of the Russian Revolution. Eurasianism's first texts in the early 1920s repre-

sented an immediate result of these discussions, informed, of course, by the range of intellectual fields that each of the Eurasianists represented.[4]

Over the course of the next decade, the group expanded to include individuals both well known and obscure. Prince Dmitrii Petrovich Sviatopolk-Mirsky (known as D. S. Mirsky in the West), a literary critic and lecturer at the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies under Bernard Pares, joined the movement.[5] In 1923 Georgii Vladimirovich Vernadsky (son of the famous Soviet scientist Vladimir Vernadsky and later known in the United States as George Vernadsky, a Yale historian of Russia) began cooperating with the movement. At the same time, Georgii Vasil'evich Florovskii, one of the initial founders, distanced himself from Eurasianism. Lieven, who seems to have played an important role in the early Eurasianist discussions, ceased his participation as well.

Despite Eurasianism's strategic revisioning of Russia's cultural affiliation and its insistence on the importance of Asian and nomadic roots of the Russian state, few non-Russians actually joined the movement. Of these, Erzhen Khara-Davan (Khara-Davaev), a Kalmyk physician evacuated with Wrangel's troops to Yugoslavia, became the most important contributor, writing a book on Chingis Khan.[6] Iakov Bromberg, a Jewish conservative, attempted to offer a Jewish perspective on the reimagining of Eurasia as a future alternative to America, where Jews allegedly lost their Jewishness.[7] However, after emigrating to the United States, Bromberg severed contacts with the Eurasianists and ceased publications in the Eurasianist vein. To be sure, both Suvchinskii and Savitskii cherished their Ukrainian heritage. Both displayed interest in Ukrainian architecture, music, history, and folklore. Savitskii even wrote under the pseudonym of Stepan Lubenskii after his seventeenth-century ancestor Stepan Savitskii, a colonel of the Cossack host of Lubno. Yet, this flirtation with a Ukrainian legacy did not contradict the pan-Russian ideology of Eurasianism: apparently, both Savitskii and Suvchinskii easily combined their loyalty to the "Little Russian" identity of the Russified gentry with a commitment to Russia's imperial state and society.[8]

In 1922, a group of monarchist officers of the former White armies joined the movement. It was led by Baron Aleksandr Vladimirovich Meller-Zakomel'skii, a wealthy émigré, musician, and *homme de la bohème*. Meller later moved on to become the leader of Russian émigré Nazis. The second organizer of that officer group, Petr Semenovich Arapov, a relative of General Wrangel, became a Eurasianist leader on a par with the founders. Arapov was deeply involved in émigré politics, and was likely an agent of the Soviet secret services. His participation in the movement helped to mire Eurasianism in a web of underground activities of the secret services and émigré political organizations. Arapov also helped convert Petr Nikolaevich Malevskii-Malevich,

a son of the late imperial Russian ambassador to Japan and a former colonel in Wrangel's army, to the Eurasianist movement.[9]

Malevskii's joining of Eurasianism was important: his contacts in British high society secured the commitment of Henry Norman Spalding, a wealthy philanthropist and theologian, to fund the Eurasianist movement. Unaware of Eurasianism's many contradictions, Spalding believed that the movement could help distract elites among Britain's own colonial populations from Bolshevism and provide them instead with a Christian ideology. Spalding's generous funding fueled Eurasianist publications, meetings, and travel, and provided the material base for the expanding movement. In the course of the 1920s, Spalding's money enabled the Eurasianists to travel, organize conferences and ongoing seminars, publish annual almanacs and numerous books and brochures, and finally, to establish a newspaper, *Eurasia*, in 1928 in the Parisian suburb of Clamart.

Within the movement, several "directions" coexisted, often uneasily. Savitskii and Trubetskoi concerned themselves mostly with the scholarly (and sometimes religious) aspects of teaching. Suvchinskii and Mirsky worked on the literary, artistic, and musical explications of Eurasianism. In 1926 they established a literary journal, *Versty*, which, although not formally part of the Eurasianist publishing empire, pursued a Eurasianist editorial policy. Arapov, Malevskii-Malevich, and Arsenii Aleksandrovich Zaitsev (the latter yet another former officer who joined the movement) focused on Eurasianist politics, converting the émigré youth and Soviet leadership to the principles of Eurasianism. These activities, in particular, mired Eurasianism in a web of connections with the fake monarchist organization, Trest, established by the Soviet secret services to infiltrate the emigration. Some activists of Eurasianism—Arapov and Iurii Aleksandrovich Artamonov in particular—became Soviet agents. The Eurasianist group even included as its member a cadre officer of the State Political Directorate (GPU) Aleksandr Alekseevich Langovoi.

To be sure, these divisions were not clearly drawn. The scholarly and literary participants in the movement never denied the importance of the political work, and officers and agents often took part in the discussions of Eurasianist theory, sometimes, as in the case of Arapov, producing interesting ideas. Equally unclear were the boundaries between the Eurasianists and other intellectuals and activists of the Russian emigration. While the ideological power within the movement—exercised mainly through editorial policies—was in the hands of Trubetskoi, Suvchinskii, Savitskii, and, to a lesser degree, Arapov and Malevskii-Malevich, the movement had numerous adherents and sympathizers who either did not completely follow the policies of the editorial troika or were deemed suspicious by the Eurasianists. For instance, in

1925 the Eurasianists were joined by Lev Platonovich Karsavin, a medievalist scholar, theologian, and philosopher, who helped to elaborate some of the Eurasianist ideas on the revolution, the Orthodox Church, and on "symphonic personality."[10] Karsavin's participation was imposed on the movement by Suvchinskii (who subsequently married Karsavin's daughter Marianna) and was only grudgingly accepted by Savitskii and Trubetskoi.

George Vernadsky was a protege of Savitskii but his historical studies were dismissed out of hand by Mirsky and Suvchinskii. Petr Mikhailovich Bitsilli, a brilliant historian of the Middle Ages, who published an original and farsighted article on the history of the Old World from the perspective of the East in a Eurasianist collection, was dismissed by Trubetskoi as an untransformed Russian "intelligent" and later ceased cooperation with the movement. The personal connections of the leaders of Eurasianism often drew into the movement very different personalities from a variety of fields: Suvchinskii's discussions of Eurasianism regularly attracted and excited musicians such as Igor Stravinsky, Vladimir Dukel'skii (Vernon Duke), Artur Lur'e, and, likely, Sergei Prokofiev. Arguably, this influence can be detected in their works.[11] Suvchinskii's relations with and influence on Marina Tsvetaeva and Aleksei Remizov are still underexplored and need further elaboration, but it is clear they were significant. A sizable literature is emerging on the encounter between Trubetskoi and Savitskii on the one hand, and Roman O. Jakobson on the other, which had important consequences for the emergence of structuralism. Practically unknown are the circumstances under which Pavel Chelishchev, later one of the most exhibited surrealists, was drawn to Eurasianism and illustrated the early Eurasianist publications. His correspondence with Suvchinskii extended over several decades. This is by no means a complete catalogue of Eurasian influence, and thus readers will appreciate that the present volume only scratches the surface of the phenomenal role of Eurasianism and Eurasianists in twentieth-century intellectual history.

Eurasianism's Contexts

Both contemporaries and latter-day scholars have often described Eurasianism as a "reaction" to the dislocations produced by the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and the Civil War, and the remaking of the Russian imperial state as a socialist federation of nations. Indeed, changes on the map of Europe following the defeat of the Central Powers were reflected in multiple visions, both political and geographic, of the postwar world. Woodrow Wilson and Vladimir Lenin famously agreed on the principle of "self-determination," and however different their understanding of that principle might have been, confirmed the arrival of the nation-state as a norm of the organization of the political space.[12] At the same time, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, a Habsburg

aristocrat and Czechoslovak citizen, envisioned the United States of Europe as the end goal of his pan-Europa movement.[13] The former Russian Empire was transformed into a heretofore unprecedented agglomeration of cultural and linguistic "nations" held together by a political party subscribing to a utopian communist ideology.[14] This transformation was often predicated on support for cultural and linguistic if not political nationalism of the USSR's many nationalities. The anticolonial movements grew in power and appeal and heralded the arrival of the former colonial peoples on the world-historical scene.

European intellectuals often responded to these profound changes with a sense of cultural pessimism and envisioned the decline of European civilization. In Germany, "Conservative Revolutionaries" such as Arthur Moeller van den Bruck sought a return to some primordial and spiritual values (without, however, giving up on modernity's technological achievements). Oswald Spengler, who was perhaps even closer in spirit to Eurasianism, offered a vision of the decline of the West that became a hallmark of European fin-de-siècle *Kulturpessimismus*. Eurasianist ideology shared the pessimistic assessments of Europe's future but it predicted—rather optimistically—the rise of Eurasia as a potential leader of the colonized peoples of the Orient in their revolt against the declining "vandalistic Kulturtraegerschaft"[15] of Europe.

Eurasia's Many Facets

Eurasianism's many participants and creators brought to the movement a range of interests, ideas, and intellectual lineages. So different were their views that at times one is tempted to dismiss the movement's unity and instead to speak of several Eurasianist streams of thought. Yet some very fundamental premises were shared across multiple divides of the movement and they formed the specific points of departure for the young founders of the movement in 1920–1921.

Among these shared premises was the centrality of the Orthodox faith for the recuperation of Russia after the catastrophe of the revolution. Taking stock of the religious and philosophical efflorescence in fin-de-siècle Russian culture (itself a part of the pan-European rebellion against positivism), the Eurasianist thinkers defined themselves vis-à-vis the great writers and philosophers, such as Nikolai Berdiaev, Petr Struve, Sergei Bulgakov, and others. The latter, in the view of the Eurasianists, failed to bridge the gap between the people and the intelligentsia as well as to produce a viable national ideology. Thus they failed to offer an alternative to the Bolsheviks' "elemental" uprising. The Eurasianists often attributed this failure to a liberal experimentation with Orthodoxy, and the solution was thus seen in a return to a conservatism that remained true to dogmas of the Church and its visions of Christianity. It is important to note that, although the philosophers of the

prerevolutionary decades saw Orthodoxy as a part of world Christianity, the Eurasianists were not just anti-ecumenical—anti-Western interpretations of Orthodoxy formed the kernel of their ideology.[16]

This focus on Orthodoxy in Eurasianism was interwoven with yet another important theme inherited from the prerevolutionary cultural fermentation. Toward the end of the nineteenth century an "Oriental" theme began to develop in imperial Russia, which came to see Russia's Asian connections as an important, indeed crucial, aspect of national identity.[17] To be sure, this theme was based on at least a century-long flirtation with the ideas of Russia's unique national path in Europe precisely because of its Asian encounters with the steppe peoples. Especially after the French Revolution, when Russia's heretofore extremely successful absolutist Europeanization turned out to be at odds with Europe's most progressive ideas of liberty and citizenship, these notions began to gain followers among the educated public. Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, the founder of Russia's modern historical writing, famously proclaimed that Moscow, whose princes united the Orthodox principalities of the eastern Slavs into a rising state in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, owed its greatness to the khans. Alexander Herzen, the great liberal and Romantic thinker and father of Russian socialism, often viewed Russia's Asian connections as a possible resource for a more just society. But after the Crimean War and the Russian colonial acquisition of Central Asia, this interest in the Asian connections of Russia's own past became intertwined with the ideas of Russia's Europeanizing and civilizing mission in the newly acquired territories. Various geopolitical and military entanglements—such as the incorporation of the Amur region in the 1850s, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, or the construction of the Eastern Chinese Railroad in Manchuria and the ensuing Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905—have contributed powerfully to the fascination of the Russian elites with their own Orient.[18] Often, as many contributions to this volume demonstrate, this fascination was paralleled by a notion that Russia's imperial projects were somehow better grounded or more benevolent specifically because of its more intimate familiarity with Asia.

However, for the classical Eurasianism of the 1920s, the literary and philosophical variations of this interest in Asia were probably the most significant. The great Russian philosopher Vladimir Solov'ev saw the Orient—especially the "yellow" East of China—as a powerful metaphor for a soulless and mechanistic European civilization. His apocalyptic visions of the end of European civilization involved a clash with the "yellow race." This theme, however important, did not become dominant in late imperial literature. Instead, Alexander Blok, perhaps the most important poet of Russia's Silver Age, reconceptualized the Asian theme in the context of poetic prophesies of the Russian Revolution. For Blok, the end of the philistine bourgeois culture

of Europe was in sight, and it was the Russian peasant masses, elemental and Asian, that had the ability to destroy the decaying world of the bourgeois and to unleash a process of rejuvenation of humankind. Blok was a central figure in the emergence of Eurasianist thought: Nikolai Trubetskoi wrote about Blok to Jakobson, and Suvchinskii published Blok's poem *The Twelve* with his own foreword in 1920. When Petr Struve criticized the new movement as "Populist" (*narodnicheskoe*), he meant exactly this belief, shared by the Eurasianists, that the Russian masses had some yet unrevealed elemental potential.[19]

This religious and cultural interpretation of Eurasia was complemented by the notion of a historically constituted cultural, ethnic, and political world. To the Eurasianists, their homeland was heir not to the medieval principalities of Kievan Rus' but to the steppe empire of Chingis Khan and his heirs. The Mongols were important for the Eurasianists for several reasons. First, they were treated as the first unifiers of the Eurasian space, whose conquests and empire building provided Eurasia for the first time with a state tradition embracing the entire "continent." Second, their empire building fit in very well with the idea of Russia's Asian encounters discussed above: their intervention was deemed crucial in saving Russia and its Orthodox identity from the ever-aggressive Catholic West. Finally, but not least important, the Eurasianists believed that the Mongols, by humiliating and destroying the Slavic principalities, had created the conditions for the emergence of a deeply religious culture of Muscovy, in which both the upper and lower strata of the people shared the same totalizing worldview spanning high culture and everyday life. In this, the Mongols appeared to be similar to the Bolsheviks, and the Eurasianists expected a new religious culture to emerge in Russia under the communist yoke.

This notion of a new religious culture ready to emerge in Bolshevik Russia was strangely paired with other kinds of hope pinned on the lost homeland. Thus, for Suvchinskii and Mirsky Soviet Eurasia was a place of the new creativity as opposed to the dying creativity of the uprooted émigrés. In part, their initiative to establish the journal *Versty* was inspired by the desire to publish Soviet authors. The politics of cultural production that these two entrepreneurs pursued was largely based on a turn toward the Soviet Union as the new incarnation of Russia–Eurasia. Contacts with Maxim Gorky were established, and, finally, Mirsky returned to the USSR, where he perished in Stalin's camps. The pro-Soviet turn of Suvchinskii and Mirsky involved other people as well, most notably the circle around the poetess Marina Tsvetaeva and her husband Sergei Efron. It is likely that Efron's work for the Soviet secret services began during his association with Suvchinskii and Mirsky.

On the other hand, the "scholars"—Trubetskoi, Savitskii, and Jakobson, the latter joining the Eurasianist scholarly enterprise but refusing to adhere

to the movement's political aspects—saw Eurasia past, present, and future as the locus and main object of a new kind of science. Opposed to the positivist and "atomistic" interpretations of traditional scholarship, the Eurasianist scholars attempted to construe Eurasia's totality through a range of visible phenomena in language, culture, history, geography, and so on. As Patrick Sériot noted, discoveries abounded: a linguistic boundary marking the presence or absence of palatalized consonants or tonality "coincided" with most of the imagined Eurasian "continent" and sharply delineated it from Latin Europe; climatic regularities established a North–South axis instead of the traditional civilizational East–West one, and so on.[20] Trubetskoi elaborated a view of Eurasia as an ethnocultural unity, Savitskii focused on the regularities of landscape and climate, whereas Jakobson produced a curious book on the Eurasian language union (a concept first offered by Trubetskoi in 1923). Following in the footsteps of these scholars, George Vernadsky produced a series of works dealing with Russian history from the perspective of the East. While Vernadsky's work was less imaginative than the brilliant ideas of Bitsilli (who likely pioneered the concept of "world history"), the former remained the only professional Eurasianist historian producing full-length monographs.

Last but not least, the Eurasianist movement offered an unusually early critique of Eurocentrism. Largely pursued by Nikolai Trubetskoi, this critique suggested that European notions of progress and civilization were nothing more than a cynical and self-interested cover for colonialist and aggressive designs maintained through ideological means woven into European scholarship in history, ethnography, philosophy, and so forth. Radically dissociating themselves from what they perceived as colonialist Europe, the Eurasianist thinkers argued that Eurasia itself was a part of the colonial and semicolonial group of countries, along with Turkey, China, India, Iran, and others. Moreover, they recast Eurasia as a potential leader of the colonial world in its upcoming battle against colonialist Europe. Strangely and paradoxically, Eurasianist thinkers linked this association with the colonial world with the neo-Romantic critique of Europe as a standardizing cultural force that eliminates cultural difference through its mechanistic and leveling modernity. Anticolonialist Eurasia was to become a bulwark on the path of this historical force.

Perhaps it was this paradoxical combination of revolutionary radicalism and conservatism that attracted so many diverse people to Eurasianism. The peculiar alliance between the aristocratic, Orthodox, and extremely conservative Trubetskoi and the left-leaning enthusiast of the avant-garde Jakobson was based on a shared distaste for the established cultural hierarchies in the production of knowledge. Trubetskoi detested Europe as a source of revolution

and mechanistic progress, and Jakobson detested it as a bulwark of bourgeois conformity.[21] Both agreed on the vision of innovative Eurasia as an alternative, even if they disagreed on some crucial details of the construction of that alternative.

State of the Art

Linked to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the need for a new intellectual framework to understand Eurasian space, research on Eurasianism blossomed in the first half of the 1990s, shedding light on a movement that until then had given rise to few works, with the exception of the precursory research done by Otto Böss,[22] or else it had been evoked in historiographical works on the Mongol yoke,[23] the Russian emigration,[24] or Russian Messianism.[25] The 1990s and 2000s witnessed a revival of works on Eurasianism, from viewpoints mainly linked to political philosophy, the history of ideas, or geopolitics. The Eurasianist movement has been studied as a political philosophy and ideology of the nation,[26] as a geopolitical theory of space,[27] as a reflection on Europe and Russia's colonial situation,[28] as a theory of the conservative revolution,[29] and in its interaction with structuralism and the Prague Linguistic Circle.[30] The biographies of the main Eurasianist founding fathers or Soviet figures such as Vernadsky, Savitskii, and Lev Nikolaevich Gumilev have grown in recent years, partly due to the opening of the Soviet archives.[31] The roots of Eurasianism have also been decrypted by the renewal of research on the Slavophiles, on the so-called pan-Asiatic trend,[32] and on the Scythian and Aryan myths.[33]

The originality of this volume consists in its exploration of hitherto ignored domains of the history of the Eurasian movement. The first two chapters in the collection address the origins of the movement, both in the Slavophile and Orientalist traditions. Chapters 3–5 explain Eurasianist theories and their intellectual novelty. Individual lives of Eurasianist thinkers are the subjects of chapters 6–8, and the final two chapters discuss Eurasianism's filiation in time with the figure of Lev Gumilev, and in space with the Japanese reception of Eurasianist ideas. Using this novel approach, the volume aims to make a new and decisive contribution to furthering knowledge about this intellectual current.

Precis

Our volume begins with the historical background of the Eurasianist movement. Olga Maiorova's contribution studies the roots of Eurasianism in Alexander Herzen, the founder of Russian socialism and populism, and, apparently, one of the first intellectuals to enunciate certain ideas that were

much later to become central constructs in the Eurasianist denunciation of the West. Maiorova's contribution offers a better understanding of the long arch of proto-Eurasianist thinking in Russian history and sheds light on both the Slavophile connections of the Eurasianists and their own interest in Herzen (somewhat paradoxical given how much the Eurasianists detested Russia's revolutionary and democratic intelligentsia). Vera Tolz's work explores scholars of the Orient in late imperial Russia and, in a corrective to Edward Said's sweeping generalizations, argues that Russian Oriental scholarship was often critical of "othering" and maintained fruitful and productive intellectual contacts with representatives of the very people it studied. In this, Tolz sees an intellectual climate conducive to the Eurasianist reshaping of Russia's identity vis-à-vis Asia and Europe. As a matter of fact, some leading Eurasianists (such as Savitskii) followed Russian Oriental studies closely and took the contributions of scholars such as Vasilii V. Bartol'd very seriously.

Three contributions to this volume propose general frameworks for the study of Eurasianism. Sergey Glebov's chapter traces the emergence of the Eurasianists' anticolonialist rhetoric in the reception of evolutionism in Russia and suggests that one of the main sources for Eurasianist anticolonialism was prerevolutionary debates on the organization of the Russian Empire's political space. Marlene Laruelle offers an interpretation of Eurasianism as a geographic ideology, rooted in complex processes of spatializing Russian identity, whereas Stefan Wiederkehr proposes viewing the doctrine as a form of Popperian historicism. The Eurasianist understanding of history was as crucial as geography to the temporal orientation of the Eurasianist project. As the Eurasianists attempted to reorient Eurasia spatially (away from Europe) and temporally (by excluding it from the allegedly universal standards of progress and civilization), they articulated a thorough and militant critique of evolutionism and attempted to develop a new holistic philosophy of sciences, based on geography and "personology."

In several studies of classical Eurasianism, contributors to the volume look at different aspects of the Eurasianist doctrine through the life and works of individual participants. Igor Torbakov presents the case of George Vernadsky and his encounters with Eurasianism as a professional historian. Martin Beisswenger explores Petr Savitskii and makes a case for the importance of Savitskii's dissertation, "Metaphysics of Economy," and its roots in fin-de-siècle Russian philosophy, especially that of Sergei Bulgakov. Beisswenger presents a convincing picture of a thinker who linked economics and religion in one holistic teaching, framed in an overall reference to the Eurasianist project. Harsha Ram takes up the underexplored topic of connections between the Eurasianist ideology and Russian modernism and suggests that Roman Jakobson's encounter with Eurasianism, as reflected in his changing

views on the futurist poet Velimir Khlebnikov, signified less an attempt to recuperate the destabilizing strategies of late imperial modernism and more an encounter with the new discursive realities of interwar Europe.

In the final chapters of the volume, we take up the cases of Eurasianism's influences over time and space. While Eurasianism's influences beyond Russia still await researchers, Hama Yukiko studies how Japanese intellectuals received and used Eurasianist doctrines in the context of interwar Japanese politics and expansionism. Mark Bassin considers the work of Lev Nikolaevich Gumilev, who remains a crucial figure in the Soviet and post-Soviet reception of Eurasianism, and studies Gumilev's uneven reception by Russian nationalists, at a time when yet another imperial venture was coming to an end.

Together these chapters cover the complexity of the Eurasianist movement and thought and the movement's unusually central location at the intersection of late imperial Russian and Soviet history; reactions to decolonization; studies of literary modernism; and global imperial entanglements. We offer this volume in the hope that it will stimulate further productive discussions of the history of this fascinating phenomenon.